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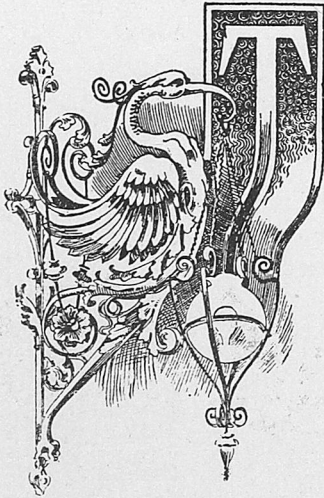
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AUGUSTUS THOMAS' HOME IN NEW ROCHELLE.

BY GENIE H. ROSENFELD.



HERE is a certain interest attached to the home of every man whose intellect has raised him above his fellows. In these days of personalities there is an idea that much of the man's self speaks in his surroundings—and this is particularly true in the case of Mr. Augustus Thomas, whose home, The Ramble, New Rochelle, is the subject of our sketch.

Mr. Thomas, the dramatist of atmosphere, whose most celebrated plays, "Alabama" and "In Mizzoura," charmed us all

by their simplicity, their truth to nature, and their carrying of us right into the very air in which their people moved and breathed, has just the home you would expect of such a man.

As simple in construction as his plays, it has, like them, the same quiet manner of insinuating itself into your good graces, until you feel it is about the only right sort of a home to have after all.

Utterly unpretentious, with no aiming at dramatic effect, it rises out of the hillside, with lines so harmoniously in keeping with the surroundings that, as Ruckstuhl the sculptor says, it reminds one more of a great grey boulder than a modern home.

Designed by Mr. G. K. Thompson from ideas and sketches of Mr. Thomas's own, it is a quaint, greasy stone structure with flattened gables, and a big square veranda, built into, instead of out from the house; a fine stone porte cochere that stretches sturdy arms widely across the driveway, as though waiting to welcome and embrace the visitor.

Inside, the house fulfils the promise of the outside. Here is nothing for show, but everything for comfort and beauty.

The interior decorations are quartered oak and black iron; the walls, where visible, are rough finished and tinted a soft French grey.

From the hall, a stairway leads to the upper floor, and is one of the chief beauties of the house. From a long cottage window, with black iron casements, the light streams down into the hall, and catches as it falls the oaken balustrade, which is of simple fine square posts, that come out towards the base with a sudden sweeping curve, that gives an effect of lightness and beauty to the whole.

The rooms on the main floor consist of living-room, dining-room and study.

Mr. Thomas is no believer in parlors. "The Ramble" boasts of none; but it has for its family to sit in a room hard to equal for beauty, artistic effect and comfort.

This room, which is some 25x20 in size, ceiled with polished rafters and brown burlap, has for its main feature its fireplace. Mr. Thomas has his ideas about building. "A comfortable house ought to be built around a centre chimney," he says—and so he has built his home. The dining-room, living-room and study group themselves around a great wide chimney, which in the living-room has been developed into a typical ingle nook.

The fireplace itself is wide and low—a regular cavern of a fireplace. It is built of red glazed brick, and over it, in black iron, is the inscription

"No matter how the north wind blow."

Within are massive black andirons, strong enough to support the real yule log.

Built out on either side of this fireplace are handsome wooden screened settles; these are big enough to hold three or four on either side, and, piled high with cushions, make a very beguiling nook for winter.

The wide, room-like porch is reached from the windows of the living-room, and here in the summer evenings the dramatist's clever little wife will fetch her mandolin and delight her visitors with the sweet little songs of her own composing, which she sings in her own peculiarly enchanting voice.

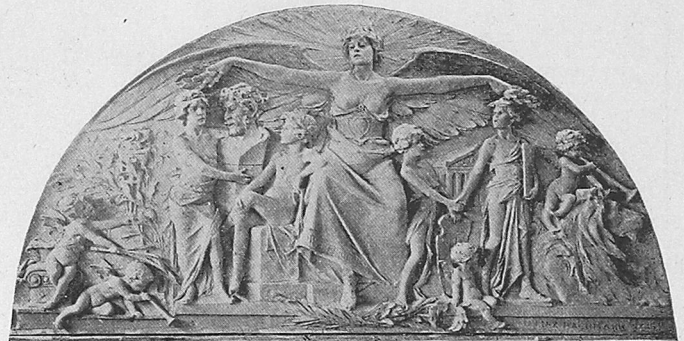
From the living-room wide doors open into Mr. Thomas's study. Here the walls are built in with diapered-paned bookcases, and

"perched upon the bust of Pallas, just above the chamber door
—a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore
—never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door."

Here are none of the little slovenlinesses ordinarily associated with the literary man.

Mr. Thomas instantly impresses you as a man who has his thoughts and his knowledge all pigeon-holed and docketed ready for instant use or reference—and it is so with his room. There is no scattering of papers. In the drawers under the bookcases lie his MSS. unbound, but sheet upon sheet, as tidy as though they were but paper fresh from the stationer's. Every morning the maid places the accumulation of papers, etc. from the day before on a large table in the corner, leaving the handsome carved writing-table free; these accumulations are sorted and distributed by the dramatist before he begins his daily task.

Here, under the sinister eye of the raven, with the sweet scent of the country, the songs of the wild birds about him, he writes those plays which are building the foundation of our American dramatic literature.



DECORATIVE PANEL IN THE STATE NORMAL ART SCHOOL,
BOSTON, MASS.

Mr. Thomas devotes much of his leisure time to art—and he is indeed more than half an artist himself. He has a little black book—the constant companion of his play-writing hours—in which it is his custom to sketch the faces and characteristic pose of his characters as they come to him, and as he sees them. The "Jim Radcliffes" and "Lisbeths," the "Careys," the "Squire Tuckers," all are here.

In the dining-room is a quaint device for a fountain amid growing ferns, as a centre-piece for the dining-table, which was designed and executed by Mr. Thomas. Around the grey frieze of the dining-room is a series

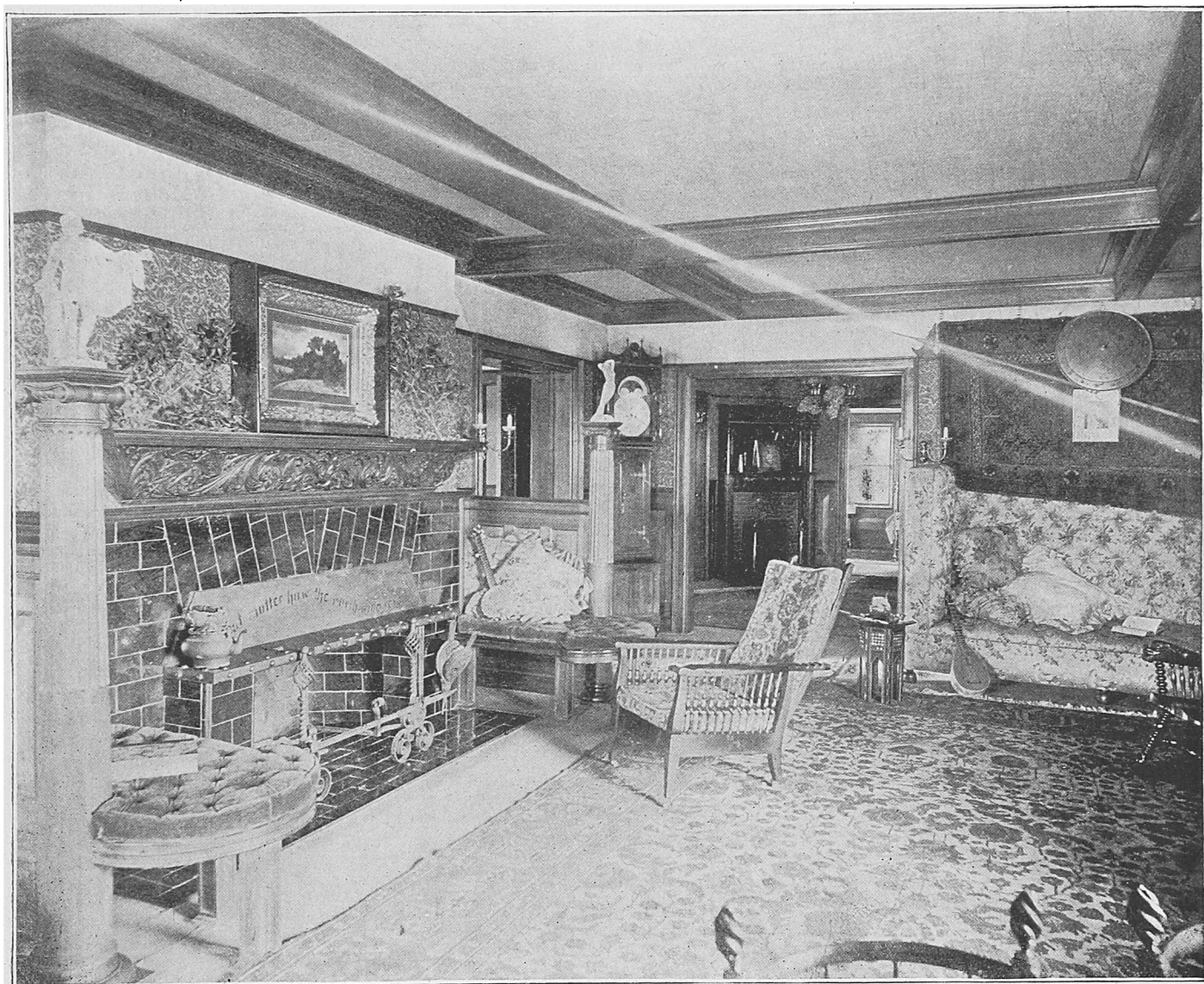
of charcoal and half tone haphazard sketches from his pencil—but it is in his boy's nursery that the most charming exhibition of Mr. Thomas's skill is seen.

Around the walls of Mr. Baby's sanctum, growing out of the dull grey background, Little Jack Horner is hard at work on his plums; the maid in the garden is hanging out the clothes; Mother Goose in actual form and shape is smiling and nodding to the little man as he plays. Much wall space, however, still remains as virgin soil. It is Mr. Thomas's dream, as his boy grows older, to sketch him in the coasting, the kite flying, the base-

Happy baby! What a nursery he has! Outside is a little screened veranda, all his own—and laughingly called his "cage." Here he can take his little naps, cool off hot days, and get a breath of air when it is too damp for him to go on the lawn. Then the cool, airy room, with its grey walls full of fairy lore, its oak mantelpiece, with the legend

"'m fiah is 'm friend."

Happy baby, to be born into a home that speaks from its every nook and corner of refinement, intelligence and peace!



LIVING-ROOM AT "THE RAMBLE," NEW ROCHELLE, HOME OF AUGUSTUS THOMAS, THE PLAY WRITER.

ball, and the various typical scenes that will mark the periods of his growth, so that when he grows to be a man the room will be full of the joys of his lifetime for him. The little man is but two now—but already a steam engine and a sail boat have bloomed out on the frieze: baby Luke has a passion for them, and tries his hardest to draw them himself. As it is his father's dearest wish that he should be an artist when he grows up, two or three fine Greek figures have found their way onto the frieze, so that Luke's love of the beautiful may be developed early.

DECORATIVE NOTE.

INEXPENSIVE materials, such as cheesecloth, unbleached muslin or cotton flannel, will be among the novelties in decoration this coming season. These cotton goods can be combined with silken stuffs, which act as borders top and bottom, but only in the lighter shades of green, brown and olive. When poled, they suit admirably every room. Their cream-like softness is wonderfully attractive, and produces an artistic effect, provided the combination is well chosen.